









presented with a good deal of the following kind:

On the third level of "Ekistic subjects" we must isolate the functions in order to study them separately. The function of residence influences every element we have studied on the second level, which in turn exists within every Ekistic unit at the first level. Now we must take the functions one by one. This will mean taking the function of residence out of all the elements and out of all Ekistic units and developing an understanding, a conception, a policy and a programme for the whole system of residence in our settlement. . . . We then move to the fourth level . . . the fifth level.

We must, in short, be thorough in our investigations: who would doubt it?

Ekistics could exist as a purely theoretical science; but its principal justification, and the only one considered by Dr. Doxiadis, is practical. So the test of any ekistic theory is essentially whether it tends to help in the creation of towns that are good to live in. Ekistic theory bears about the same relation to everyday living in towns or cities as political economy does to everyday family spending: the need for the two generalized sciences is similar; but the connections ought to be displayed sometimes. It is a gravely disappointing feature in Dr. Doxiadis's book that only very rarely does he give any impression of being aware of what it is like to be in a city rather than planning it from above: there are nearly five hundred figures in his book, but almost no photographs or drawings made at ground level, hardly anything so frivolous as a picture whose direct relevance to his own living the reader might recognize (in this respect Mr. Bacon's book is immeasurably its superior); nothing but tables and graphs and at best two-dimensional plans which are incidentally (because of injudicious screening) extremely hard to read. And although there may be a place for a specifically theoretical and general study of ekistics, the real danger, which Dr. Doxiadis does not escape in this book, is that theory will become the master of practice to the extent of predetermining not only goals but ways of attaining them. Many readers may well feel alarmed when he justifies using projects he has worked on as examples not only because he knows them well, but because "they correspond to the theory I am presenting".

Dr. Doxiadis shows himself to be in the grip of certain theoretical ideas and models which turn his thinking rigid. He is, for example, fond of speaking of human settlements as organisms, and draws many—too many—conclusions from the analogy between them and natural organisms without keeping in mind that the identification must be a metaphor. He quotes Bertrand de Jouvenel's insistence on the fact that it is the whole human organism that has value, not its component parts, while the body politic is only justified by its components; real persons. But he does not draw the moral of this: that the relation of cell to organic body is not at all the same as that of person to city; and indefensible analogies continue to be drawn. Again, Dr. Doxiadis presents us with a very simplistic account of the layout and relation of ekistic units, which might be satisfactory as a basic, elementary model, but cannot possibly justify him in sweeping practical conclusions, such as the total overall superiority of a gridiron layout of streets. The rigidity of his thinking occasionally leads to absurd non-sequiturs, as when we are told that "we can have revisions of plans every given number of years in the same fashion in which we have to renew our driving licences". What can be the point of such a comparison?

More seriously, he time and again spoils or limits the usefulness of discoveries of real value. Perhaps the most important of these is his realization (which he demonstrates convincingly) that a "dynamic" city must have room for a growing centre, and that the growth must be non-directional, for otherwise "pressures on the central area become intolerable and in the end suffocate it. So—in practice as in theory—Dr. Doxiadis draws a straight line in one direction from the existing city centre, pointing it indefinitely. But why a straight line? There are considerations beyond particular topographical

considerations which might recommend, say, a crescent, which could remain open-ended within any conceivable period for which we could plan, but might contain the city as a unit in a way impossible for the indefinitely extendable rectilinear plan.

This emphasis on the straight line plays a large part in determining Dr. Doxiadis's thinking further into the future. If one continues a straight line on the earth's surface, sooner or later it will meet another straight line. Repeat this often enough, and we are in Ecumenopolis, the world-city that sprawls like an endless suffocating net over the entire habitable surface of the earth. The maps with which Dr. Doxiadis illustrates his nightmare chapter in *Cities of Des-*

everything that a city should have: no one is too far to walk from his home to anywhere else in the city, yet it is large enough to offer multifarious satisfaction. May I understand he another Arezzo? But there is of course a very important difference between a city of fifty thousand people and a neighbourhood in an urban spread that may run to so many millions. A sense of containment as well as the immediate link with Nature is one of the conditions for reaching so near an ideal. Dr. Doxiadis on the other hand eagerly pictures parks which will "represent all the different landscapes from which the people come", gardens "which will try to catch the meaning of the whole earth (!) and to present it on a very small scale in

million), the world population will stop growing, because

an increase beyond that magnitude would not leave enough space for a proper habitat for man, for the preservation of nature, and for the survival of open spaces in proper balance with the built-up areas of the world.

But what can he mean by "proper" here? What is a proper habitat for man, and who is it who can "calculate man's needs" against the possibility of life on this scale? Doubtless technological advances will enable the earth to support that is, produce enough food for a much larger population than it has now, even though the number of those without enough to eat is still steadily increasing. But will that guarantee a proper balance between man and

human settlements do not of which are drawn on our maps of a totality of functions as much more extensive areas as the indispensable to the survival of the part even though Man can get that even though Man can the built-up area of nature depends on their total living

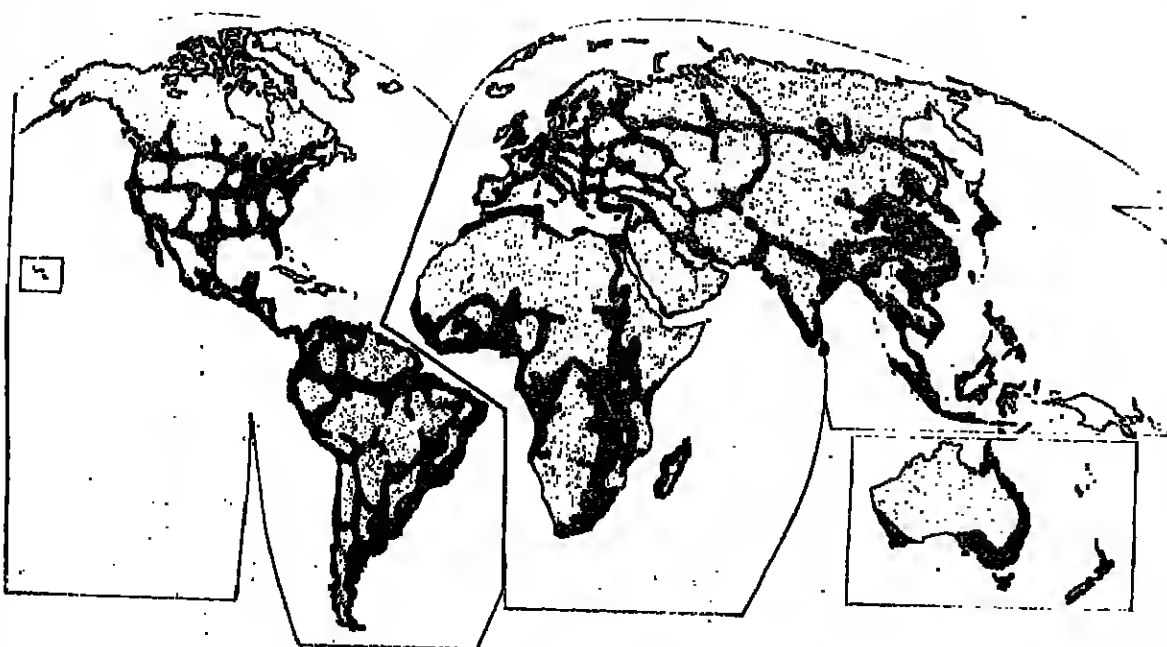
At this point we may begin a little. For it all comes to what is thought indispensable what is a proper balance? cannot accept Dr. Doxiadis's phrasies will be grateful to put the issue so clearly. In sense made plain in these sentences, it can be claimed that parts of the world, English north-western continental Europe, for example, Ecumenopolis is now, that England is now, and that the indispensable will not continue to be the country gets just as populated. Mill thought years ago that it would be if the population of England were then; many of us today at the dreary suburbs of England, would say right. So if we are free to 2,100 that any further population would destroy balance, we are free to now.

As we all know, there would have called a perfect solution to the problem world's galloping birth-rate any possible solution practice be appallingly if we could compound differences and settle against the kind of Doxiadis, has in store, we want to hold the even set the movement Douglas Houghton has been playing Canale waves of human fecundity the present world situation for such a solution must be able and childish to the cynic. It is not more Dr. Doxiadis's picture of a utopian dream-world which into being because the have no beginning and the same reasoning a tyranny seems a rather outcome. And even if that our political problem solved so dramatically by world tolerable in which human nature that remains captured like a Victorian a great industrial city, bitten down to bones, humanity endlessly Linkinwater's courtyard *Nickelby*, in which all represented by a crime and a few million flower-pots? There are 2,000 million years to go.

But though this is the thinking which is likely, must immediate solution given an unfortunate prominence by its plan *Destiny*, it would be Dr. Doxiadis's own recognizing, by way of bizarre conclusions, invented the very new ekistics—as a science—handed. For this must be and so is a recognition of and profound humility debate; if his expression seems dogmatic, he is a dictator. The most moving of his humbly comes in quotes against himself: lesson for us all. It tells

a recent incident in Rio de Janeiro presented a plan for of the slums, the city. Upon completion of tion, somebody asked are to be no "favelas" pose the samba?

Dr. Doxiadis adds a with a wisdom to which seem many planners do approach: I could not answer that as long as I am not old, will know that we are our study of the sciences means.



"The world-wide network of Ecumenopolis, with a population of some 35 thousand million people, which will absorb the important cities of the past, present and future by the end of the twenty-first century. . . . one of Constantinus Doxiadis's "somewhat misleading" maps from *Cities of Destiny*."

they are—as the more spacious treatment in his own book shows—somewhat misleading. But only somewhat: we are still promised the great webs of building over all the continents, with the open space remaining as mere chinks in the urban spread. (Rupert Birkin in *Women in Love* assured Ursula Brangwen, who did not want to live in chinks, that those who will inherit the earth "are the children of men, they like market-places and street corners best. That leaves plenty of chinks". He had not seen Dr. Doxiadis's maps.) Now Dr. Doxiadis, however hide-bound we may find his thinking, is—it cannot be doubted—a very humane man. He insists that the planning of our cities

must be done with only one thing in mind: how to serve man best, and not how to expand and enlarge existing urban forms which are incommensurate to both scale and content with the forms that are now going to have to be created on a completely different scale.

The most obvious fear of a vast world-city is that it should be just like any of our present ones, but thirty times larger than all of them put together, an agglomeration of hideous in itself and utterly beyond man's power to grasp imaginatively. So Dr. Doxiadis stresses again and again the crucial importance of preserving the human scale. Law 25 in his basic theory states:

The most important balance of all the elements in space is that of the human scene, which is fully controlled by Man through his body and senses.

This is no mere sop to poorly bullied humanity: it has, for instance, no important corollary in the need to keep the smaller ekistic units distinct within the dynamic and growing metropolises. And for these smaller units Dr. Doxiadis retains a belief in a size that has been proved in very different conditions: a population nearer to fifty than a hundred thousand (which was that of ancient Athens and still is that of many admirable towns in Italy and France) represents, as he sees, the limit of what can become an immediate part of human consciousness, but it is at the same time capable of yielding very substantial rewards in civilized living. It has been remarked somewhere that Arezzo contains towns that

a symbolic way". This is doubtless derived from notions of Japanese gardening; but it unfortunately also suggests people cramming themselves into plummy landscapes, rather as we walk today through tiny model villages, and the Lake District on a Coney Island holiday weekend, or Professor Toyne's book, give what must be a very feeble pointer ahead. The possibility of solitude (the need for which Dr. Doxiadis insists on) will be an ever-unrealizable dream.

The fact is that, while Dr. Doxiadis's prophetic imagination is certainly more fertile than Professor Toyne's and probably than Mr. Mumford's, it is nonetheless essentially unskilled and barbaric. The world-city to which he looks forward, however much of an improvement on the dismal reality of the present in sanitation and speed of movement, must represent the final disintegration of the idea of a city but contained human community built up with reverence for human life and a human scale—which it is as important to preserve horizontally as vertically. Megalopolis becomes, as Mr. Mumford puts it, "an instrument for disrupting the processes of culture and ultimately arresting human development. . . . little less than a slow-acting equivalent for a nuclear catastrophe".

The assumption of the onset of Ecumenopolis is based on the view that all the larger human settlements have become or are about to become "dynamic" (the word is too often the favourite of people attempting to justify purposeless movement against the claims of coherence and stability, though it would be unfair to accuse Dr. Doxiadis of that). He would probably call Mr. Mumford's insistence on the need "to prevent the coalescence of one urban unit with another" a static solution "to a dynamic problem. Yet Dr. Doxiadis too believes in an ultimate overall situation of stasis, to which it is not at all clear that his dynamic philosophy entitles him. For he has decided that at somewhere near the

nature! What is a proper balance between man and nature? How elastic is it, and what can it absorb on one side without giving way on the other?

What is most striking behind the thought both of a pessimist like Professor Toyne and of an enthusiast like Dr. Doxiadis is the nearly complete acceptance of historicist assumptions. Dr. Doxiadis on one occasion allows himself to open a sentence with the ominous words, "History shows. . . . What in particular history shows him is that the world population has been steadily increasing for a long time, and is at present increasing at an accelerating rate, and that therefore the increase must go on. Only, comfortably, it will come to a stop, not when an ideal, but when the "last possible" state is reached, when the possibility of "proper balance" is in danger—if, presumably an agreed notion of the proper can be arrived at and acted on by all. So the historicist premise is taken for granted, but dropped (in desperation?) when its ultimate logic becomes unendurable. Why then should it not be declared unendurable now? Dr. Doxiadis insists at the beginning of his book that his whole work is based on the belief that the situation in which we now find ourselves is not inevitable; that it is up to the people to change it ("history shows" that this can be done). Yet he is determined that Ecumenopolis is the destiny or the doom of humanity; for

the great forces shaping the Ecumenopolis, such as economic, commercial, social, political, technological and cultural, are already being deployed and it is too late to reverse them.

Wild generalizations like this are quite without any identifiable meaning: how can we recognize all these forces that are thrown at us with such life respect for our intelligence? Yet they can be dangerous, for if not challenged, they help to clear the path for the things they are supposed to forestall. It seems, however, when one looks into the argument more closely, that everything is not quite so irretrievably in train after all. In an extremely revealing answer to those who argue that Ecumenopolis

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# FRANK SWINNERTON

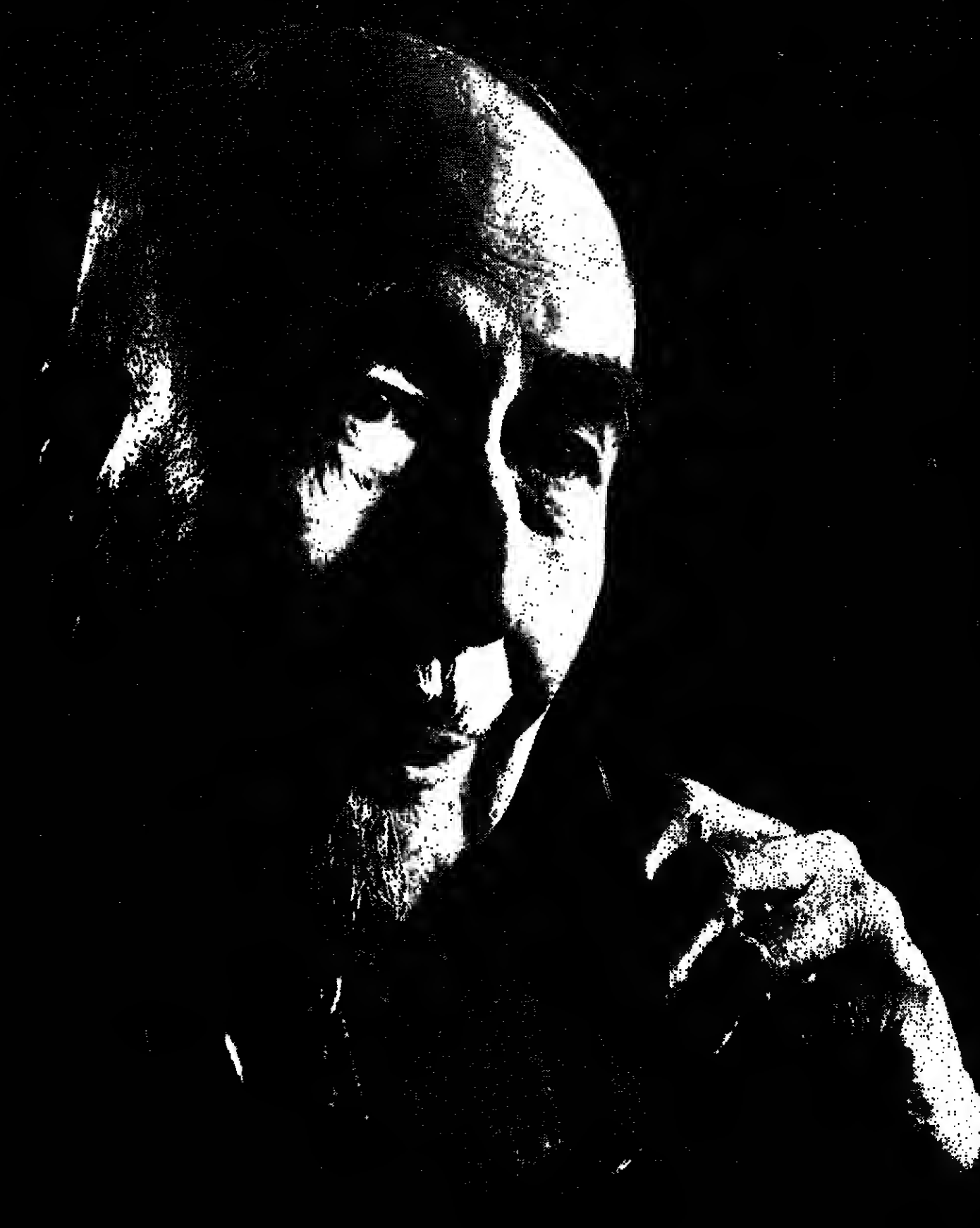
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## The great red rift

JOHN GATTINGS: *Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute*. 410pp. Oxford University Press, for the Royal Institute of International Affairs. £4.45.

How did China's communist leaders look on the Russians when they proclaimed their government in China in October, 1949? Their victory had not been won thanks to Russian help; it would not be far from the truth to say that Mao Tse-tung and his party became the rulers of China in spite of the Russians. To the complaints that they might have accumulated over the years as communists was added the anger they must have felt as nationalists in seeing China's richest industrial area in Manchuria stripped by the Russians after the end of an eight-day war against Japan.

Nevertheless, a provisional decision had been taken. "Leaning to one side", which Mao Tse-tung declared as a policy in June, 1949, was an alignment adopted by the party, according to Mr. Gittings's calculations in his *Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute*, some time towards the end of 1948. But that decision offers only the skeleton of an answer to the question of what these Chinese really felt about their communist neighbours who ruled in distant Moscow. Both P'eng Chen and Lin Feng have since been revealed as no lovers of the Russians. There must have been many others who shared their sentiments, whether fed by the suspicion that one communist can quite easily harbour for another, or by the strongly flowing current of Chinese xenophobia.

Whatever freedom his colleagues might have had to say what they felt, Chairman Mao had other matters of personal concern that overlaid the distaste he must have felt for Stalin's past record of relations with the Chinese Communist Party. For national, party and personal reasons he had to make his peace with Stalin. China's recovery demanded the aid, China's security demanded the alliance, Mao's position in the international communist hierarchy had to be asserted. If he was to take his due place in this hierarchy, he had to align himself beside the man who had followed Lenin. Thus while Stalin was alive there could be no open Sino-Soviet dispute.

Yet even while Stalin lived the strains were obvious. How bad they were during the Korean War we have yet to discover, though the documents that Mr. Gittings analyses so penetratingly give some hint of them. The mere fact that Mao spent two months in Moscow negotiating his treaty suggests how hard the bargaining was. It followed that once Stalin bad

gone, and China's first steps in recovery had been made, a settlement in Korea was possible and a new era could begin. It could not be long before the inherently divergent aims of China and the Soviet Union would become apparent. It was at this point, in the autumn of 1954, that Khrushchev and Bulganin, conscious of Stalin's narrow-minded nationalism, tried to put relations between the two countries on a warmer and more generous basis. But they were too late to divert the tensions that would soon emerge. Had there arisen at this moment, Mr. Gittings suggests, a new, young leadership in the Chinese communist ranks then there might just have been a chance of equitable relations, otherwise the dispute was inevitable.

The real surprise was that it should have been carried to the lengths it has, especially in the period of polemics from 1963 until Chairman Mao put down his pen to turn his attention to the greater urgency of the cultural revolution in China. What Mr. Gittings's indispensable survey has done is to analyse these exchanges by subjects, extracting from all the letters references to such general matters as the Soviet Union and the Chinese revolution, or to the many specific issues over which conflict arose—the Soviet Twentieth Congress, the Cuban crisis, the Indian border, and so on.

To each collation of extracts Mr. Gittings adds his own comment and an explanation of the passages he quotes. In addition, he has printed in appendices the full or partial texts of twenty-two other documents pertinent to the dispute, such as the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1950, the joint declaration published after the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit, and the speeches made at communist gatherings from 1957 when the battle was first joined. Among these documents, Mr. Gittings' own *People's Daily* blast on the Cuban issue—both published on the same day—make a happy pair for study.

Reading these extracts, one is tempted to think that the Russians underestimated the Chinese from the beginning. The McCarthyist purge went some way to clearing the State Department in Washington of its many of the academics; it is hard to believe that the advice the Russian leaders had was any more plentiful from men who understood what the renewal of Chinese civilization was about, or what strength of scientism pride would be found among the men Mao had gathered about him to Yanan and which could be seen plainly enough in Mao's early writings. The impression one gets from

these exchanges is of the Russians floundering against an incomprehensible as well as infuriating opponent. One catches the tone of Russian attitudes in the 1964 extracts: from the writer Yuri Zhukov, who complains how Mao in his early writing had said that everything foreign—including Marxism, Zhukov adds with scorn—should be treated like food by the Chinese to be chewed, masticated, digested, and separated into waste that could be evacuated and an extract that could be assimilated: it was the survival of China that mattered and Marxism was simply the agent of its renewal. Yet just such an analysis of Chinese intentions towards western ideas was noted by several western observers long before the Chinese communists had gathered strength. Indeed it has been a Chinese attitude to imported ideas as far back in history as one cares to go.

In his short introduction putting the dispute into historical perspective, Mr. Gittings is not misled into thinking that any real sense of common purpose ever arose from the common ideology both sides proclaimed. The Russians may have fooled themselves for a time by thinking that Marxism was "an unshakable basis for the friendship of our peoples"—but not for long. As Mr. Gittings makes plain, China's decision to be an independent great power—which was never in doubt from the beginning—meant that China could never accept economic and military dependence on the Soviet Union, though obviously the dispute hurried on China's independent nuclear programme. Nor could the Cold War weigh equally on both powers, as for a time in the early 1950s it seemed to do; once the Soviet Union had good reasons for exploring a détente with the Americans, and while the Americans in turn remained as adamant as ever towards China, the Russians were bound to look edgily at their vast, self-regarding neighbour.

In the process of extracting, refining and interpreting, Mr. Gittings shirks none of the husk questions, even to asking himself why the Chinese chose an alliance with the Soviet Union of all. At the same time he dismisses the misleading anti-theses of nationalism and ideology which needlessly confuse the debate. He makes useful points on what the exchanges omit as well as on the subjects he has classified. One notes also what else is lodged in the letters themselves. At the time when relations were outwardly good, the Chinese seem to have made no attempt to establish any real contact at a party level. In the long and detailed *Origin and Development of*

the Differences between the ship of the U.P.S.U. and the Chinese refer several times to many internal discussions followed by the Twentieth Congress. These were these discussions? The two occasions when Mao was in the Soviet Union, in 1949 and 1954, were a talk with Mr. Khrushchev and a meeting with Mr. Bulganin. The two occasions when Mao was in the Soviet Union, in 1949 and 1954, were a talk with Mr. Khrushchev and a meeting with Mr. Bulganin. The two occasions when Mao was in the Soviet Union, in 1949 and 1954, were a talk with Mr. Khrushchev and a meeting with Mr. Bulganin.

There remains a big and unanswered question for which Mr. Gittings does not sufficiently allow. It has been more taxing to think that the present one since the Chinese ambitions go to the heart of the dispute and how far Mao Tse-tung needs to be detached. The dispute is not easy to make, and it is itself so expressive of emotions. Nevertheless the different nature of the two sides' sowed some seeds in the dispute. Mao's departure will remove a potent element now embodied in Gittings's judgments of Chinese. The dispute is not easy to make, and it is itself so expressive of emotions. Nevertheless the different nature of the two sides' sowed some seeds in the dispute. Mao's departure will remove a potent element now embodied in Gittings's judgments of Chinese.

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## shake well before use

JOHNSON: *The Unfortunates*. 215pp. Secker and Warburg. 21s.

It is all very well, but it is, as Mr. Johnson says, "an experimental" novel like a curve-up, disjunctive and naturalism in a disjunctive manner. The novel has been boxed instead of being laid out as a disjunctive Mr. Johnson, and once in its presentation, it is a somewhat lackluster rebel against the universe, brags that he "accepts" chaos as a metaphysical principle; to show why, he keeps on re-emphasizing his dead friend Tony, victim of a rapid career at twenty-five. But the disagreeable facts of contingency are not accurately reflected by Tony's coming back to life in bits and pieces. And in any case, these bits and pieces, far from being unsolicited, are the product of a visit made by "I" to a Midland town to report a football match: Tony's story is secreted by the townscape which the two of them had formerly experienced together, and now and again he withdraws into the unsavory to leave the narrator's mind free for the business of his day.

When it gets on to the soccer *The Unfortunates* is artlessly autobiographical. Mr. Johnson is very much himself as he cringes in the press-box, fighting to preserve a personal view of the match from the clichés that crowd his keyboard. Equally direct are his feelings about the "Heavy Mob", the mindless commentators who earn a lot more than he does for their afternoon's work without

the random and the consecutive? It would be a privileged brain that had all its random thoughts at once. What is more, the idea of random thoughts has been suspect for a long time now, ever since Freud showed his audience that no matter how unalike neighbouring thoughts might look they are neighbours for deep and maybe dramatic reasons.

The scheme of *The Unfortunates* has been weakened by Mr. Johnson's determination to embody in it his own belief that human experience in its raw state is without shape or meaning. The narrative "I" of his novel, a somewhat lackluster rebel against the universe, brags that he "accepts" chaos as a metaphysical principle; to show why, he keeps on re-emphasizing his dead friend Tony, victim of a rapid career at twenty-five. But the disagreeable facts of contingency are not accurately reflected by Tony's coming back to life in bits and pieces. And in any case, these bits and pieces, far from being unsolicited, are the product of a visit made by "I" to a Midland town to report a football match: Tony's story is secreted by the townscape which the two of them had formerly experienced together, and now and again he withdraws into the unsavory to leave the narrator's mind free for the business of his day.

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## Queer street

GRAHAM WARD: *Intersection*. 320pp. Hotteliosos. 35s.

On the three floors of an outcast house in a Thames-side suburb live five homosexuals. Mr. Ward's *Intersection* are the points at which their five lives cross during the course of one dull July evening. Significant things are usually happening where curves intersect on graphs: the brevity of Mr. Ward's time-space and the detailed intensity with which he writes of his heroes' affairs, thus inspire in some misleadingly statements about homosexual living, even if the whole thing is done in comic terms. Unfortunately, what comes out in the end is both flippant and at the same time the novel is a

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BASIL BLACKWELL

# Townscape as an art

THOMAS SHARP: *Town and Townscape*. 150pp. John Murray. £2 5s.

Oxford, Cambridge, Winchester, Salisbury, Stamford, Newbury, Kings Lynn. Mr. Sharp's roll-call in *Town and Townscape* of civilized towns or live-streets like Broadway and Blanchard might easily be dismissed as the conservatism of pleasure-ground or townscape for the tourist; rewarding to the eye so long as no questions are asked about the fitness for any twentieth-century purpose of the richly matured facades surviving from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, punctuated with happy accidents and ennobled by time. In presenting examples drawn almost entirely from the centres of such towns Mr. Sharp might be thought to have weighted his evidence. Where the buildings are a blend of public and private, of civic and commercial, of grand civic exchanges mixed in with theatres, churches and gentlemanly Georgian terraces, the art of townscape can draw on its full orchestra. What, we might legitimately ask, of the suburban townscape of the twentieth century?

Mr. Sharp's answer to that objection might well be that if town-planning had not been led into the wilderness of zoning, so that even today our new towns carefully segregate those traffic-producing industrial estates round their fringes, the ingredients of a newer townscape might be more varied. But for the most part the charge against Mr. Sharp of being an antiquarian will not stick. He has been looking at towns and relishing their virtues for far too long to be dismissed as a man looking only backwards. He has a real sensibility and has seen clearly how much has been needlessly lost in his own lifetime, how much our environment has been destroyed when it could have been enriched. As his examples from Winchester and Salisbury show, modern buildings can perfectly well take their place in the older streets.

But no consideration of townscape



Glastonbury, Dorset, where more than 100 out of the 1,300 buildings officially listed as of architectural and historical importance have been demolished in the past twenty years in favour of a "modern town".



can avoid the curse and blessing of our day, the internal combustion engine. Amid the swirl of cars it needs constantly to be emphasized that townscape makes for the comfort and pleasure of the pedestrian, who is, as he walks, a natural man in his natural movement, responding to the urban environment not merely by the pleasure of the eye but by the body's apprehension of space, of light, of mass, as he finds his movement through space is opened, contained, unfolded, articulated and embellished with visual grace-notes whether natural or artificial.

Buildings and the floor-space between them, street furniture, trees, grass and water are the ingredients; but one should not forget traffic; as usual pendulums swing unthinkingly and we are now acquiring an inheri-

tance of pedestrian shopping precincts that are lifeless for all but the peak hours of the shopper's day. Traffic is a part of the urban experience; the shopping street needs bustle, but it must be a bustle of local traffic that has its own relationship to the pedestrian, not through traffic hurrying carelessly down a one-way street or some makeshift curve-up of a motorway driving pedestrians underground even to cross the road.

As one of the founding fathers of the modern revival of townscape as an art, Mr. Sharp remains fixed in his pedestrian standpoint. If his book explores no new lands it does gather together the experience of a lifetime's looking and sets down without equivocation the principles that alone can save us in the battle against the urban motorway, the prestige office slabs, the careless scattering of towers

without thought of the ruin or dominate, and carved up simply to allow movement for cars.

Oxford has long been Mr. Sharp's home, and it has much to say to savour as well as to fear from being mature in its own merits. This is a city that has itself into "hysterical" content a road crossing a "don't go" while at the same time it is much more meaningful place, the University Parks to be the domination of towers. Mr. Sharp, most telling of all, are the before and after open spaces such as St. James' Park, where vast, impersonal landscape the magic by destroying natural scale. Such domination, spoiling streets as well. Some of the most beautiful and perceptible may serve a purpose but makes only for loss of scale, the street to visual speed. Baker Street in London, from the Hilton Hotel tower, New Zealand House helps to hinder his viewpoints. Ticks of domination is the Big Ben the Euston development suggest darkly over Tottenham Court Road. And when we do have a glimpse of the modern, it is admittedly serves for defining the past. All Sook, it is enough to see the Residency B.B.C. extension.

Most disturbing to Mr. Sharp, the London scene is the tower, reducing to pellucidity the whole complex of Palace of Westminster Cathedral, other end of Victoria Street. There, not, asks Mr. Sharp, to the neo-classical architecture, acknowledged hierarchy of the Danes, French and British, that question others arise. Buildings are most sacred to best embody the aspirations of a nation? Why do we live in a where the architecture of our daily catches the public eye?

These underlying questions to the supreme problem of life, are what are we today, sheltering the quality of our life. There are those who would shun them out of all recognition with advances in technology. Sharp would have none of it. Such his book is limited, but the past without attempting guidance for the future.

## ARCHITECTURE

# Classical order and colonialism

NISSON: *European Architecture in India, 1750-1850*. 214pp. of plates. Faber and Co. £7 7s.

Colonial architecture of New India and the Southern States of India has far long been admired and is now being documented. The architecture of India, on the other hand, has been either ridiculed or ignored. James Fergusson, as pointed out by Sir John Summerson in his *European Architecture in India, 1750-1850*, gave it a sane and realistic appraisal. In 1882, Roderick Cameron, in *From India* (1938), published photographs which first time did justice to early Indian architecture, but it has been left to a Swedish scholar, Dr. Sten Nilsson, to make the first scholarly study. Free of the colonial bias which hamper the modern Indian, he can look at the architecture with an unemotional eye. He does not see the Residency in terms of structure and without the speer of Sir Lawrence fixing him with his cold eye.

Nilsson has wisely limited his study to a century and, within that, to the neo-classical architecture, specific cities and buildings to the Danes, French and British, that question others arise. Buildings are most sacred to best embody the aspirations of a nation? Why do we live in a where the architecture of our daily catches the public eye?

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House of about 1800 in Clyde Road, Lucknow, showing mixed Indian and European decoration.

For the "urban patterns", he discusses the fortified enclosures such as Daman, Surat, Pondicherry, Fort St. George and Fort William, the expanding towns of Tanquebar and Calcutta, and finally suburban developments as exemplified in the British cantonments and the absorption of Serampore by Calcutta. He then examines a number of specific examples of various types of building: government houses, palaces, resi-

dencies, government public buildings, town houses, country houses, upland and grain stores, Christian churches and tombs. His vivid and detailed discussions of these particular buildings are illustrated with plans, water-colours, and his own photographs.

In the second half of the book Dr. Nilsson summarizes the conclusions deduced from examining individual examples, and these he arranges in five sections corresponding to cities in Vignettes: *Ten Books on Architecture*. Here he shows how the European classical tradition was transformed into something new with distinctive qualities of its own. He discusses the training of the architects, in most cases Company military engineers, before they went out to India; he lists the handbooks which they used, and in some cases he can show how designs by Sir William Chambers, James Paine or Batty Langley, served as models. He then explains how climatic and social requirements combined with differences in the local materials available led to

modifications of the classical vocabulary and this resulted in a new vernacular. A group of fascinating photographs of ruined buildings reveal the type and size of brick used, the quality of stone, the use of column-bricks for columns and terra-cotta pots filled with mortar for balustrades, as well as imported prefabricated iron-work. The climate of India led to spacious planning with park-like gardens, to the addition of verandahs, to loftier rooms, to the changing of proportions of columns as well as to their spacing. The use of terraced rooms for sleeping, the addition of venetian shutters, grass blinds and *jhinniks*, and the adoption of the Indian bungalow for rapid building are all elements in the evolution of this new classical language.

*Architecture in India, 1750-1850* is a brilliant first attempt at surveying, analysing and interpreting this much neglected type of European architecture. It may be hoped that this pioneer essay will stimulate other scholars to continue the study. The field is enormous, ranging from Portuguese influences in Goa, Dutch influences in Bengal and British architecture as varied as the chalets of Simla, the High-Victorian monsters of Bombay, or the New Delhi of Lutyens. But the scholar must hurry. The new India is an incapable of looking objectively at this architecture as were the British themselves. For many Indians it is now a distasteful expression of a defunct imperialism. There is no government protection. The Archaeological Survey is not responsible for these buildings, and their age does not automatically protect them. In central Calcutta, the town houses are either turning into slums with washing slung between the colonnades or are being torn down for concrete flats. The Asiatic Society of Bengal has replaced its Ionic-pilastered mansion with a characterless concrete box. In Park Street cemetery, that mysterious city of tombs is crumbling away. The landscaped park at Barrackpore with its meandering lakes and shady walks is returning to dry scrub, and there is now talk of the Rumbay Town Hall being replaced by a modern-type building. Is it too much to hope that books such as Dr. Nilsson's fascinating and enthusiastic study will help the new India to look at these buildings with fresh eyes and to see them not as temples of imperialism but as a true Euro-Indian architecture which is a part of India's own cultural heritage?

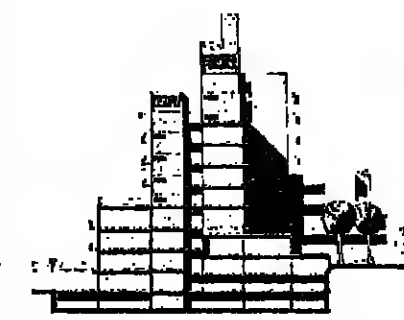
No. 9 Russell Street, Calcutta; built about 1820 and now used by the Calcutta Turf Club.



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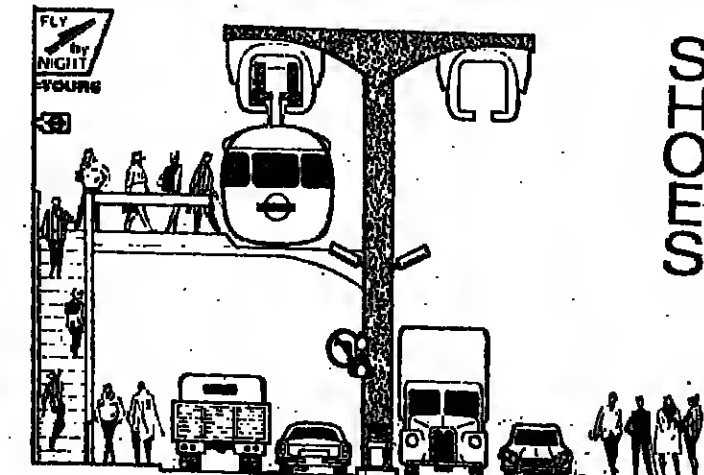
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"Murder most foul, or how to kill townscape" (Thomas Sharp).

## Park and pavement

GEORGE F. CHADWICK: *The Park and the Town*. 388pp. Architectural Press. £3 10s.

Mr. Chadwick's book is not well illustrated. The fault is partly that most of his photographs are extremely dull and some badly blurred (they are also unnumbered and without cross-reference in the text); but chiefly that his subject is not one that it is possible to illustrate tolerably on the scale of even a large octavo: several hundred acres becomes the merest diagram when reduced to a few square inches, and of course most of the views are from the air, not enough from the "participant's" point of view.

Mr. Chadwick's writing is not very lively either; and much of the book consists of long, rather stodgy descriptions of not always very interesting parks. This is a pity, because the history of public parks has its own interest and a very obvious importance in the planning of future towns. Moreover, Mr. Chadwick, who is himself a talented landscape architect,

shows in his rather inebriated style that he has a keen awareness of what has gone wrong and is likely to continue to go wrong with the planning and design of our parks and pleasure grounds. He probably knows as much as anyone about his field, and there is much meat in his field. But it would have made its points better with far fewer examples and a clearer organization.

Mr. Chadwick brings his book up to the present with some brisk descriptions of park systems in Scandinavia, which, he much admires, and some tentative gestures towards an imminent future; his main conclusion is that the Victorian park, ennobled within large areas of housing, is radically out of proportion and irrelevant to present needs and habits of life, that our designing needs to be far more flexible to accommodate new and different kinds and speeds of recreation, which, in short, demand a true regional plan. In this he is undoubtedly right.



# Who was Corb?

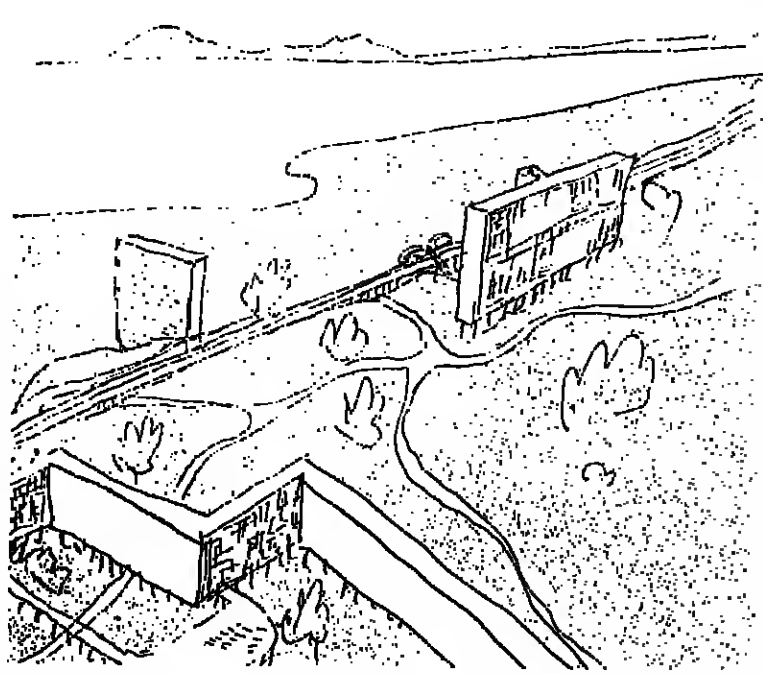
STANISLAV VON MOOS: *Le Corbusier*. 431pp. 73 illustrations. Frauenthal; Huber.

Le Corbusier's life as a creative architect extended from 1917 until his death in 1965 at the age of seventy-eight; a life crowded with incident and personal development, over a period embracing the birth of modern architecture, as we know it, and its growth to self-awareness.

Dr. Persner has pointed out that Le Corbusier was not one of the "first generation" pioneers. Before the First World War the young Le Corbusier or Charles-Edmond Jeanneret as he then was, still built in Swiss regional styles, but his education proceeded apace and by the 1920s his architecture, as characterized by the white-painted boxes of his early villas, was becoming widely known. The German critics, with their long experience, understood that this was not the *Sachlichkeit* that they held to be an article of the modern faith, but a merely symbolic functionalism: indeed classicism in new dress.

In England, on the other hand, Le Corbusier's reputation was that of the firebrand functionalist who had announced that a house was a machine for living in. The translation of the architect's book *Vers une architecture* by Frederick Etchells (an ex-student of Le Corbusier) in 1927 as *Towards a New Architecture* confirmed this impression—in spite of the author's express argument to the contrary—and also made the details of the modern style available to English architects.

In the 1930s F. R. S. Yorke, Maxwell Fry and others reworked Le Corbusier's domestic style for English conditions: from Paris to London was but a short step. A decade later, Le Corbusier's monumental



A drawing by Le Corbusier, 1922. From Edmund Bacon's *Design of Cities*, reviewed in the front-page article.

projects, among them the League of Nations and the Moscow Centenary, provided the inspiration for the T.H.U. building and the Royal Festival Hall. During the past twenty years the change from smooth to rough in Le Corbusier's choice of materials, and his affection for vaulted ceilings, has been echoed in the theory of Brutalism and the design of our universities.

In spite of Le Corbusier's voluminous self-documentation, only very few writers have so far attempted to evaluate him critically, and none of them has given us a critical biography. We must therefore be especially grateful to Stanislaus von Moos for attempting to fill these needs and his book, *Le Corbusier*, will be welcomed by all who want to understand Le Corbusier's role in its historical context.

The first two chapters deal with Le Corbusier as a young man and illuminate his exact relationship with the La Chaux-de-Fonds art school, and his splendid archi-

tectural education under the influence of Auguste Perret in Paris and a whole row of German architects, including Peter Behrens in Berlin. Le Corbusier's travels in Europe and the Middle East brought him into live contact with the history of architecture, and his studies in the libraries and museums of Paris provided a scholarly basis for further study. Here Herr von Moos provides the evidence for what has long been conjectured.

In the main part of the book, the author deals with Le Corbusier's architecture and town planning. The famous houses and the strangely evocative structural diagram of the "Domino" house that so closely resembles Gottfried Semper's Caribbean "primitive hut" are discussed against the background of Corbusian theory. A clear account of the familiar, but still distressing story of how he was kept from the execution of the League, the U.N., and the Moscow buildings explains some part of Le Corbusier's cold and hostile personal reputation. Fortunately he at last received the commission to build the new Indian capital at Chandigarh—today the buildings are being squabbled over by rival state governments—and he, who admired Lutyens' imperial New Delhi, made a design that was a culmination of a life's work.

Without doubt the author has compressed too much material into too little space: the buildings cry out for fuller treatment and at the same time the biographical supporting framework is permitted to fall away in the breathless race towards the "synthesis". Consequently the personal element of the early chapters rather dies out. We discover too little about the man and not enough about the buildings: this difficulty of phasing is the main problem about this architectural biography.

The provision of illustrations will interest the general reader but the student will need Le Corbusier's own *Oeuvre Complète*, in which there are text references, near to hand. Similarly the argument regarding Le Corbusier's painting and sculpture cannot be followed with only four plates, none of them in colour. The section on "Synthesis" is quite the least satisfactory in the book. It seems too lightly researched to be of value, and the author's account of Le Corbusier's theory of proportion fails to carry conviction. The categorical statement that the idea of the Golden Section proportion was taken from Matila Ghyka's *Le Nombre d'Or* is certainly mistaken.

Against this must be set the author's success in persuading the Fondation Le Corbusier to relax its hold upon the architect's *Nachlass*. Herr von Moos gives us a number of unknown sketches that confirm Le Corbusier's forms and effects from the past. His Hadrian's villa at Tivoli is probably a source for the chapel at Ronchamp.

It is to be hoped that this monograph on Le Corbusier will soon be available for the general reader and for students, in an English translation. It will be of great value to them. The index is satisfactory but the references could usefully be expanded, especially in respect of the first part of the book. The lack of a bibliography hardly matters. But the man

# Where it all began

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER: *The Sources of Modern Architecture and Design*. 216pp. Thames and Hudson, 35s. (Paperback, 21s.)

Dr. Pevsner, who has already made an almost insurmountable corner in the antecedents of the Modern Movement with his *Pioneers of Modern Design*, now clinches his claim to be the master of this subject with *The Sources of Modern Architecture and Design*, which originally formed part of his larger volume on *Sources of Modern Art*. No one but Dr. Pevsner could have packed so much information into so compact a work or illustrated it more effectively. As in his other analytical surveys of art and architecture there are no words wasted, no half-digested thoughts. Indeed the two most comforting things about all Dr. Pevsner's writings are very apparent in this new book: his clarity of expression and his firmness of opinion.

He takes his reader through the complex of springs, streams and cross-currents that were the origins of modern architecture and design without ever leaving him in doubt about his own convictions. "That is one memorable thing about them (Morris's designs): the others are these . . ." and he lists four salient, incontestable points: on a few pages further on, when discussing Art Nouveau, he writes: "The incubators of Art Nouveau belong to the years 1883-8. They are the following . . ."

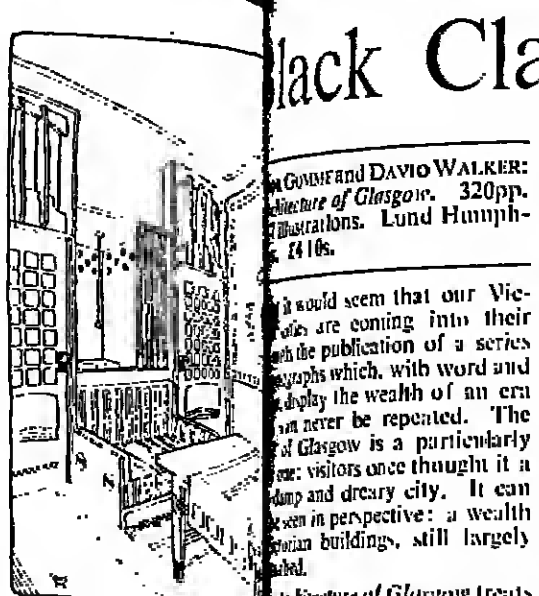
# Uncommunicative

CESARE BRANDI: *Struttura e architettura*. 246pp. Turin: Einaudi, L. 2500.

Professor Brandi's title may seem misleading in the Anglo-Saxon reader: his book is not about building construction and architecture, but—his publisher's blurb proudly explains—is the first Italian attempt at applying what is now called structuralist method to the criticism of architecture. Those familiar with Italian eagerness for any intellectual novelty will—of course—take his claim with a pinch of salt; if they are at all interested in the subject, they will have looked at Professor Brandi's book on architectural semantics, which for all its weaknesses, shows great good will, or Umberto Eco's ten-year-old essay which operates at a higher level; and *auri leterum* Professor Brandi's ten-year-old essay on the semiotics of architecture could also enter a claim.

For all that, Professor Brandi has his own contribution to make. The first in this collection of essays, which gives the book its title, starts with a sympathetic, if somewhat confusing, summary of Roger Bastide's anthropology, and introduces his reader to Brandi's principal methodological innovation which is covered by the term "astanza". Readers will not find this word in any dictionary, but has to be reinforced to imply a kind of emphatic "being there" or "thereness". Professor Brandi is forced into this curious piece of speculation because he is unwilling to abandon his ultimate idealist—even Crocean—position: the work of art, he suggests, can only be understood as a totality of visual sensations; it seems almost as if it only existed in such an assembly; for all his invocation of Saussurian linguistics, Professor Brandi goes through the exercise of applying the linguistic model to the study of architecture, only to introduce the notion that:

If the essence of language is communication, the essence of architecture is not to be revealed in "communication". A house does not communicate that it is a house, any more than the rose communicates that it is a rose. The house



An interior design by Hoffmann, c. 1900.

—and again he tells his reader what to recall. Indeed it is at his clearest and most in his handling of that "essence of individualism" which has again become topical. "The house communicated of itself, it so quickly" applies, however only to Art Nouveau. These rare scene suffers, identical commercial imitations of innovations. Since he rightly today's architecture and design taken a turn away from alism towards fancy, Nikolaus should perhaps perhaps more public service by sequel to his *Sources*—perhaps the title "Whatever happened Modern Movement?" for could unravel for the by now more complex strands of the present state of art and design.

# European Cities & Society

One line is quoted in the Italian because there is whether it can be translated, whether it has very much to do with the passage as a whole. But the passage as a whole is interesting implications: to Brandi, communication is a level activity, largely based on the knowledge of one's own meanings; he seems quite aware of connotation as an aspect of language. Which is why, when to the game of finding an actual parallel to the Saussurian line, he can only see it in the style, and so come to the *Stilismus*, an elemental style which refers not to an object, perceptual distinctions, but to the subject's intellectual content.

The weaknesses of this position are apparent in one of the longer essays of the book, the one on Burnt which Professor Brandi, of Birmingham's own rationale of heating either "just plain religious" or "economic-religious" to answer Burnt's reasoning was not cover for whose general concept would allow the spectator to a saturated form of "astanza" whole fascinating matter of the mind's explicit intentions, his borrowings, from medieval Muslim architecture, his apparatus of almost literary style are all subsumed, is deliberately excluded from Professor Brandi's of reference.

*Struttura e architettura* is a dated, sensitive, occasionally exercised in the old-fashioned way of "pure visibility" of the kind with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Its own value, however, is that it seems wholly alien to the text of architectural criticism, however, the essays, on which Professor Brandi touches are so that even the wrong-headedness in its up-to-date terminology have its positive value: pointing up the deficiencies

of the book. The lack of a bibliography hardly matters. But the man

# Black Classical

DAVID WALKER: *Architecture of Glasgow*. 320pp. Illustrations. Lund Humphreys, £4.10s.

It would seem that our Victorian cities are coming into their own as the publication of a series of books which, with word and picture, display the wealth of an era never to be repeated. The architecture of Glasgow is a particularly rich source: visitors once thought it a dump and dreary city. It can even in perspective: a wealth of buildings, still largely

unexplored. *Architecture of Glasgow* treats chronologically and the cathedral dominates its pages. After a discussion of buildings we jump, with a number of illustrations, into the idiosyncratic of the nineteenth century. An architect of some ingenuity, Stark, in 1859 designed what is the earliest star-shaped building in Britain, now unfortunately demolished; but the which dominates the mid-century scene is undoubtedly Wilson's Free Church, consisting of a splendid interplay of vertical and horizontal lines is struck by the predomi-

nance of curved frontages to buildings in the city and the play of curve in circles, and crescents give an unexpected richness. One always felt the city was impressive but the texture and quality of David Wrightson's photographs is a revelation: he has an uncanny gift for pinpointing the essential ingredients in a scene.

Glasgow has surprisingly few interesting industrial buildings. Her warehouses are small in scale and look like elegant office blocks. The exception is Bolton and Watt's Houldsworth's Mill of 1844, one of the earliest essays in iron and brick fireproof construction unwisely demolished. Where this mill is construction, ingenious Randolph Elder's Engine Works is scale-shattering. Everything is immense—a single story over fifty feet high made of chunks of rough masonry deeply rusticated as though designed for a race of giants.

Glasgow and Liverpool pioneered the glass and iron framed warehouse facade dating from the 1850s. Many have now been destroyed, but the city still has a number which merit preservation. Gardner's Warehouse in Jamaica Street certainly being the most elegant. The visual value of these buildings is still not generally recognized, and they fall easy victims to ruthless demolition.

Alexander Thompson is shown to have been mistakenly called "Greek" and a whole chapter is devoted to his work. He is seen as a forerunner of the Modern Movement in architecture, the earliest protagonist in this country. Drawings of his Queen's Park Church, burnt down in 1942, put his work into better perspective and lend credence to the author's thesis. His output was prolific and many of his buildings survive. Glaswegians would do well to cherish these and support the author's plea for the restoration of the gutted interior of the Caledonian Road Church which was destroyed by fire in 1965. The Corporation has already voted money for repairs to the outside.

Glasgow, like Edinburgh, is a black classical city in which the Gothic Revival made only minor inroads. The most notable, though not highly successful, is the university, improved by Oldrid Scott's spiky tower and his mazelike treatment of the undercroft of the Hume Hall. There are of course Gothic churches which punctuate the landscape and relieve what would otherwise be a monotony of long tenement blocks.

The description of the buildings in *Architecture of Glasgow* is penetrating and at times both amusing and lyrical. The fantastic Padian Gothic pile of Templeton's Carpet Factory, built in 1889, is described as "a delightfully gay—almost irresponsible—piece which brings a puckish but innocent gleam to the art of decoration". Although Alexander Thompson is singled out for special reference, C. R. Mackintosh is lumped in with others in a chapter headed "1880-1914". Perhaps within the context of this book the treatment is admirable, for Mackintosh and J. J. Burnet are (with the exception of the Adams brothers, whose influence on Glasgow is marginal) the only two Glasgow architects to have had monographs written about them. [This perhaps explains the almost threadbare treatment of Mackintosh's work in the text.] In compensation Burnet is given a good coverage—the authors seem to have a great regard for him. His work, though not as fine, has perhaps been too long eclipsed by the international reputation of Mackintosh. The townscape chapter seems almost an afterthought, written as captions to David Wrightson's splendid photographs, whose penultimate one of the Neoclassical Glasgow leaves a lasting impression of the grey solidity of the city.

Architecture of Glasgow places Glasgow within the heritage of Victorian architecture and surely should be enjoyed for its descriptive text (there is an excellent little essay on architectural semantics inserted as a long vertical footnote) and its lively illustrations by many who may never have an opportunity of visiting the city. It is equally (if not more) important to her inhabitants, and will lend support to those who are already

# Railway Gothic

JACK SIMMONS: *St. Pancras Station*. 120pp. 51 plates. Allen and Unwin, £2 12s. 6d.

The Midland Railway teraced 1844 came to London late and by the hard way in the 1840s. It had first to burrow under Hampstead, cross the Fleet river and Regent's Canal, displace and rehouse thousands of slum dwellers from Agers town and as many corpses from old St. Pancras cemetery. Having eluded its way to the Euston Road between the L.N.W.R.



Two coaches from the booking office in St. Pancras station, representing (a) the engine driver and—

at Euston and the G.N.R. at King's Cross whose metals it had been using, the Company was determined to make a splash. Professor Simmons, History, Leicester University recalls that the 1840s had their financial crises as well as the 1940s. The expenditure of five million pounds on St. Pancras Station was an expression of faith in the future of railways, the company, and Britain itself. First the Chief Engineer, W. H. Barlow, was empowered to span the tracks with the biggest cast-iron roof in the world. In the vaults beneath, beer was to be stored; the middle being a barrel of Burton's ale. In 1865, Sir Gilbert Scott, architect of the Foreign Office, was chosen in competition to put up a "monster" Gothic hotel in grand Midland red brick. Train shed and hotel together represent the perfect



(b) the railway guard.

fusion of functional and romantic ideals in Victorian architecture.

Professor Simmons rightly holds that a building—especially a station or a hotel—is much more than its elevation and the sum of materials used for its construction. In what he modestly describes as an extended lecture, he writes of the staff, engines and carriages, commuters and travellers, air raids in both wars; of the first hotel manager, Mr. Etzenberger (formerly of the Victoria, Venice) who persuaded a reluctant building committee to adopt Scott's more expensive proposals; of Sir Arthur Blomfield and his assistant, Thomas Hardy, supervising the shifting of poorly made coffins, a macabre experience which must have influenced the poet. "St. George for England and St. Pancras for Scotland" remained a motto-hall joke, but St. Pancras served the Midlands well, introducing Pullman carriages and permitting third-class passengers to travel on all trains. Photographs show Barlow's ingenuity and the quality of detail in the hotel.

Even today it is hard to imagine

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# Academic freedom in Spain

"*Thou Infidel Place*" is a memoir of her life in genteel life as Miss Yonge's response and in its portrayal of English ladies: it is a good thing that the ladies were tough. Girtton (under Emily Davies, left her £40,000 in debt through her insistence on bringing more and more money into brick and mortar, but without her intrinsically gentle and single-mindedness the college would never have been begun. One hundred years later it is easier to see how absolutely right she was to concentrate on the issue of higher education for women than his own, a distinct from the suffrage issue, and to see that it was essential for women to compete with men on exactly the same terms and for the same examinations. Yet as late as 1920 there



